

your kindness, and known philanthropy, in the cause of education.

It may be proper to add a few facts concerning myself, that you may understand the nature of the application.

And *first*, I would on *no account* ask it as an act of charity, but simply as an accomodation by which one of the many uneducated young men of the South may acquire means to benefit the State; *Second*, That the Committee may be assured the *funds are not misapplied*, let the *President* of the College, or *yourself*, direct their expenditure; *lastly*, of myself I may say that my character is at least untainted by crime or misdemeanor, that I left school in Pennsylvania in 1861 to cast my lot with the South; that I was promoted to a Captaincy, at 19 years of age, by order of Mr. Seddon,³ Sec. of War, (I still have his commission, signed by President Davis); that I have been everything from a clerk to Editor of a Daily newspaper, and, subsequently, of a weekly; that I was considered worthy of the conservative nomination in Rutherford and Polk counties, for the convention to frame the new Constitution; that I was elected a delegate to the State Conservative Convention; of which I was a Secretary; and that it is my ambition to benefit my State, and species hereafter.

Please to overlook the prolixity of this communication, Dear Sir, and give it your *favorable* consideration. I should be pleased to have your views on its practicability, or otherwise, at as early a day as will be convenient.

If you will also consider this letter as entirely confidential, I shall be obliged.

With much regard, I remain, Sir.
Your ob't serv't
And friend

¹Randolph A. Shotwell (1844-1885) became one of the most volatile and controversial figures of the Reconstruction era. He founded the *Western Vindicator* in 1868 and sold it to L. P. Erwin. The *Vindicator* was published 1868-1873. In 1869 Shotwell moved from Rutherfordton to Asheville, where he established the *Citizen*, a weekly newspaper. As a Ku Klux Klan leader, Shotwell was highly incensed in 1870 when Colonel V. S. Lusk, district attorney, sent bills of indictment to the Buncombe County grand jury against certain white men for "Ku-Kluxing some Negroes." Shotwell was not named but he harshly criticized Lusk in the *Citizen*. Shortly afterward the two men had a vicious quarrel on Pack Square. The quarrel developed into a fight that resulted in Lusk's drawing a pistol and shooting Shotwell in both legs. Shotwell gave Lusk a Masonic sign, effectively ending the fight; evidently Lusk was a fellow member of the Masonic Order. In 1872 Shotwell was convicted of "Ku-Kluxing" activities and was sentenced to a prison term to be served in Albany, New York. Ironically, it was Lusk, then the district attorney of the United States, who interceded for his old adversary and secured a pardon from President Grant. Shotwell returned to North Carolina, where he resumed his activities as a newspaperman and politician. He presumably bought the *Asheville News and Farmer*, a name he changed to the *Asheville Citizen*. From 1876 to 1877 he served as state representative from Mecklenburg County. Thad Stem, Jr., *The Tar Heel Press* (Charlotte: Heritage Printers, 1973), 51-52, 96-97, hereinafter cited as Stem, *Tar Heel Press*; Hamilton, *Reconstruction in North Carolina*, 462, 577-579; Cheney, *North Carolina Government*, 457; J. G. de Roulhac Hamilton (ed.), *The Papers of Randolph Abbott Shotwell* (Raleigh: North Carolina Historical Commission, 3 volumes, 1929-1936), I, xvii-xxv, hereinafter cited as Hamilton, *Shotwell Papers*.

²The Reverend Nathan Shotwell, a native Virginian, was a Presbyterian minister serving